

# PUBLIC & COMMERCIAL RECREATION

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## Goals

**Recreation Opportunities.** Meet recreational needs by:

1. Providing recreation opportunities on land and water areas that serve multiple purposes such as habitat protection, subsistence activities, and mineral resource extraction.
2. Assisting communities through cooperative planning, conveyance of state lands, and grants-in-aid for parks and trails within population centers.
3. Encouraging commercial development of recreational facilities and services through leases, loans, and technical assistance where public recreation needs can most effectively be provided by private enterprise, while avoiding or minimizing conflicts with traditional uses and protecting local economies.

**Recreation Resource Protection.** Protect natural and heritage resources by:

1. Protecting recreation resources including public access, heritage resources, and natural features of regional or statewide significance.
2. Assisting other land management agencies to perpetuate natural and historic features on non-state lands, in community park systems, and on private property by providing technical assistance and grants-in-aid.
3. Rehabilitating and maintaining recreation facilities that enable greater appreciation of Alaska's scenic and historic resources.
4. Maintaining viable fish and wildlife populations.

**Economic Development.** Increase economic benefits of tourism by:

1. Providing for increased employment in tourism and recreation.
2. Providing infrastructure support for facilities and services related to tourism.
3. Providing technical assistance and grants-in-aid to promote tourism and provide education programs on tourism.

4. Maintaining a balance between the economic benefits of tourism and existing community lifestyles.

## Management Guidelines

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**A. Shelter Cabins.** A system of shelter cabins should be established for public, non-profit use. Cooperation will be sought with municipal or federal governments, ANCSA corporations, or nonprofit organizations for construction and management of shelter cabins, or use of cabins received through enforcement actions.

**B. Permanent Commercial Recreation Facilities on State Land.** Lodges or other private facilities designed to be run as private, profit-making recreation facilities may be leased if the facility fulfills the following conditions and a finding in accordance with AS 38.05.035.

1. Commercial recreation development adds to or enhances public recreation opportunities.
2. The use generated by private, recreation development will not result in significant adverse effects on important fish and wildlife populations. In making this determination, DNR shall consult with the Department of Fish and Game.
3. The commercial facility and the use it generates will avoid significant negative impacts on the amount and quality of existing uses, including fish and wildlife harvest. It is recognized that a quantitative determination of the effects of the proposed facility will rarely, if ever, be possible, but an assessment of impacts should use information as available from DNR, DF&G, appropriate coastal districts and community organizations listed in Appendix B, or other available sources. The assessment should include the following:
  - a. The number of commercial recreation leases and permits that already exist on state and other land in that unit and the amount of use they generate.

b. Management intent and guidelines of this or subsequent plans for the unit.

c. Management objectives for nearby non-state lands (to the extent this information is readily available).

This information will be gathered as part of the normal leasing process and the notice requirements described in *Coordination and Public Notice*, Guideline C, page 2-5.

4. The facility can be sited, designed, constructed, and operated in a manner that minimizes conflict with natural values and traditional uses of the area, including reindeer fawning areas. See *Subsistence Activities and Traditional Uses* Guideline A, page 2-43.

5. Additions to existing facilities, rebuilt facilities, or new facilities will be sited and designed in accordance with stream corridor, access, wetlands, and other guidelines of this plan. Final approval of a permit or lease for the facility will be given only after consultation with the Department of Fish and Game and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation.

**C. Temporary Commercial Recreation Facilities on State Land.** Tent camps and other temporary private recreation facilities designed to be used as private profit-making facilities may be permitted if the facility fulfills the following conditions and is determined appropriate after interagency review.

1. Private recreation development adds to or enhances public recreation opportunities.

2. The use generated by private, recreation development will not result in significant adverse effects on important fish and wildlife populations. In making this determination, DNR shall consult with the Department of Fish and Game.

3. The commercial facility and the use it generates will avoid significant negative impacts on the amount and quality of existing uses, including fish and wildlife harvest. It is recognized that a quantitative determination of the effects of the proposed facility will rarely, if ever, be possible, but an assessment of impacts should use information as available from DNR, DF&G, appropriate coastal districts and community organizations listed in Appendix B, or

other available sources. The assessment should include the following:

a. The number of commercial recreation leases and permits that already exist on state and other land in that unit and the amount of use they generate.

b. Management intent and guidelines of this or subsequent plans for the unit.

c. Management objectives for nearby non-state lands (to the extent this information is readily available).

This information will be gathered as part of the normal permitting process and the notice requirements described in *Coordination and Public Notice* Guideline C, page 2-5.

**D. Commercial Recreation.** Most state lands will be available for permits and leases for commercial recreation. Commercial recreation leasing requires public notice under AS 38.05.945 and 38.05.946 at least 30 days before the action. In addition to the public notice requirements of the statutes and the *Coordination and Public Notice* Guideline C, page 2-5, a public meeting will be held for commercial recreation lease applications upon the request of the appropriate coastal district, local government, ANCSA corporation, 25 members of the public, or community organization listed in Appendix B. Commercial recreation leases will not be allowed in certain important habitat areas: marine mammal haulouts, seabird colonies, sheefish spawning areas, and within one-quarter mile of mouths of anadromous streams or enclosed estuaries. These areas are shown on the management unit maps in Chapter 3.

Additionally, alternative sites must first be considered in applicable special use areas of the coastal plans, consistent with the appropriate coastal plan policies. Commercial recreation leases may be allowed in these special use areas if no feasible and prudent alternative site exists, and the applicant provides information demonstrating such to DNR.

**E. Optimum Use of Sites.** Achieve optimum use of recreation sites consistent with maintaining high quality recreation experiences, wildlife harvest, environmental quality, and safety.

**F. Other Guidelines Affecting Recreation Resources.** Several other guidelines may affect recreation management practices. See the following sections of this chapter:

- Coordination and public notice
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Forestry
- Heritage resources
- Public access
- Shoreline development
- Stream corridors and instream flow
- Subsistence activities and traditional uses
- Trail management
- Lakeshore management
- Wetlands management

### **Land Allocation Summary**

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The area's land and natural resource base provides the setting for a wide variety of dispersed outdoor recreation opportunities. Present levels of nonconsumptive outdoor recreation use in the area, such as rafting, boating, camping, and hiking, are low due to area population, remoteness, and limited access. Most nonconsumptive recreation on state lands is by local residents near population centers. Recreational activity by visitors takes place main-

ly in the Brooks Range and on certain rivers such as the Kobuk and the Noatak.

State lands will continue to be available for public recreation except those offered for land disposal. Most state lands will be available for permits and leases for commercial recreation facilities. However, commercial recreation leases will not be allowed in high value habitat areas: seabird colonies, marine mammal haulout areas, sheefish spawning areas, and mouths of anadromous streams and enclosed estuaries. The high value habitat areas are shown on each management unit map.

The plan does not propose the allocation of any state land for parks, recreation areas, or recreation sites specifically reserved for outdoor recreation. Recreational and scenic qualities of state lands will be protected through plan guidelines dealing directly with these values and other resources such as fish and wildlife habitat.

In the planning area, recreation is a co-primary land-use designation for state uplands along the Kobuk River (Unit 3d), and for the beds of the Kobuk and Noatak rivers in Unit 7. Recreation designations occur for secondary use in 23 sub-units, wherever recreation activities currently exist and are documented (see the Resource Information Summary Charts in Chapter 3).